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AUTHOR Burket, Linda Lee
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ABSTRACT

The literature review reported in this paper was conducted to increase an awareness of the positive effects that parents can have on their children's reading progress. The 36 annotations resulting from the review are organized under the following categories: (1) parental factors influencing reading development in children, including the effects of positive parental participation and the need for parental involvement; (2) strategies to increase parental involvement; and (3) preschool and primary grade activities for parent-child participation in reading development. Following the annotations, a summary, conclusions, and recommendations are offered. (RL)

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POSITIVE PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT IN THE AREA OF READING DURING PRESCHOOL YEARS AND PRIMARY GRADES

BY

LINDA LEE BURKET

Graduate Student

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Study Directed

by

Charles R. DuVall, Ph.D.

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INTRODUCTION

"Reading is a key, a door, a passage, it can lead to good things or it can lead nowhere." (Karl:37) In our world of today, we must think about reading to promote our business of life. Since the business of life begins at home, this is an appropriate place to initiate prereading skills and an interest in reading.

Home has often been considered a child's first school and parents a child's first and most influential teacher. (Duff and Adams:207) Parents have a significant role in preparing their children to read and in supplementing and reinforcing formal reading instruction. However, many parents fail to acknowledge their importance to their children as teachers or role models. A large number of parents are willing to cooperate, but they may not know what actions to undertake or they may lack confidence in their ability to aid their children in the area of reading. Parents, allowing for exceptions, are not skilled in formal educational techniques. Given an awareness of their potential and a little guidance, parents can have a very positive influence on their child's reading growth and reading attitudes. They are a valuable educational resource which should be fully tapped.

In elementary schools of today, almost without exception, instructional priority is given to the development of

reading skills. If a poll were taken among teachers there would be nearly unanimous agreement that reading is the most important responsibility a teacher has. If a poll were taken among parents, there would be nearly unanimous agreement that the major concern of parents is a desire for their children to become capable readers. (Duff and Adams:207)

These concerns should serve as a natural alliance between teachers and parents, and this mutual concern should lead parents and teachers to seek help from each other. Seldom is this the case. Too often these forces appear to operate at opposite extremes, rather than in a mutually supportive way. Many teachers fail to recognize that parents can play a role in their child's education. Often times parents who have shown an interest in their child's reading development have been considered meddling, over-ambitious parents. Teaching reading has been viewed as the responsibility solely of trained educators. Reading must have a carry-over into life outside of school and not be something that happens at a particular time of day at school.

There is a growing awareness that the home and school need to form a partnership to ensure successful reading experiences for children. This includes the conviction that parents can and should take a positive role in the development and reinforcement of reading skills, and the overall reading growth. Educators and parents continue to try to arrive at a supportive partnership whereby the child reaps

the ultimate benefits of successful reading experiences.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

In spite of recent recognition of parental role importance concerning children's reading growth and attitudes, the majority of parents are unaware of their potential ability to aid their children's reading development. Even though many parents are willing to cooperate, they are unaware of strategies or methods to follow to help their children. Many teachers are unwilling to recognize the importance of parents in nurturing reading skills. These factors served as the basis for the organization of the study.

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The purpose of the study was to increase an awareness of the positive effects that parents can have on their children's reading progress, to improve and increase parental involvement with formal reading programs and to list ways which will enable parents to aid their children's progress in the area of reading. both during the preschool years and the primary elementary years.

ORGANIZATION OF THE STUDY

The first part of the study has dealt with environmental or parental factors concerning the reading skill achievement and the reading attitude acquisition of children.

This included the effects of positive parental participation and the need for increased parental participation concerning reading development.

In the second part, strategies to increase parental involvement in the area of reading were discussed.

The third part centered around activities for parent-child participation in reading development. This section was divided into two categories: Preschool activities and activites for children in the primary grades. Entries in each section have been listed in order of their importance. Kindergarten, first, second and third grades have been considered primary grades.

DEFINITION OF TERMS

Balanced reading diet--"Reading performed in diversified areas" (Criscuolo:23)

Communicative reading readiness--"Exercises that emphasize language and concept development instead of repeating letter names or sounds"(Giordano:17)

Critical questions--"Questions which require the child to use logic. (Why did the clown tease Dumbo?)"(Giordano:18)

Early readers--"Those children who have not received school instruction in reading, who are able to recognize a minimum of twenty words on a word list and who read some books independently. In standardized test terms they would be reading at a grade one level or higher." (Teale:924)

Judgmental questions--"Questions which require the child to place himself or herself in a character's situation. (How did Dumbo feel when he saw his mother locked up?)" (Giordano:18)

Literal questions--"Questions which require the child to repeat information. (What kind of animal was Dumbo?)" (Giordano:18)

Mechanics of reading--"Specific reading skills such as overall comprehension, getting the main ideas from paragraphs, inference and interpretation"(O'Rourke:341)

Nonverbal environment--"An environment in which children are not encouraged to speak"(Smith:13)

Preschool--"Of, or pertaining to, or designating the period in a child's life from infancy to the age of five" (Webster:667)

Quantitative reading habits--"Those reading behaviors which are characteristic of persons who do large amounts of reading"(O'Rourke:341)

Rule of thumb--A method of selecting books at the appropriate level, whereby the child reads a passage in a book and for each unknown word holds up a finger. When the child comes to the thumb, the book is too difficult." (Criscuolo:21)

ANNOTATIONS

PARENTAL FACTORS INFLUENCING READING DEVELOPMENT IN CHILDREN

Effects of Positive Parental Participation

Grimmett, Sadie A., and McCoy, Mae, "Effects of Parental Communication on Reading Performance of Third Grade Children," The Reading Teacher 34:303-308, December, 1980.

The authors analyzed the results of a study conducted of third grade children's reading levels and the effects on these levels after increased communication between the parents and the school concerning the child's reading progress. The results suggested that parent involvement can influence the child's reading program and consequently increase time devoted to reading at home. It was also noted that parents need continuous communication with their child's reading teacher in order to facilitate the quality of involvement in reading and the quantity of involvement.

Wells, Reese, "Parents and Reading: What Fifth Graders Report," Journal of Research and Development in Education 11:20-25, 1978.

Wells attempted to identify positive and negative experiences in the home that affected fifth graders' reading motivation. The study revealed the isolation of certain factors that the students perceived as having pronounced effects on their reading attitudes. Three parent-negative facts were characterized by overstress on reading, punishment and parent-induced frustration. Two parent-positives were characterized by supportiveness (providing interesting reading material) and arousal of interest. It was also noted that children responded favorably to subtle rewards which stemmed from their own reading activities. This involved parents who promoted library trips, bought extra books, considered a child's interest, stimulated a child's curiosity and lavished reading praise upon them. The factors which emerged in the study of Wells clearly stressed the importance of home influences. Evidence seemed to indicate that the parent who was indifferent to the child's reading needs and who failed to provide proper motivation, would have an indifferent reader.

Teale, William H., "Positive Environments for Learning to Read: What Studies of Early Readers Tell Us," Language Arts 55:922-931, November/December, 1978.

This article briefly examined a series of studies of early readers conducted to identify and discuss the factors which are repeatedly associated with a positive environment for learning to read. Four environmental factors were found to be interdependent. These factors were: The availability and range of printed materials in the environment, the understood function of written language in the environment, the environmental facilitation of contact with pencil and paper, and the quality of interaction between the child and others in his/her environment in regard to reading activities. Reading to children was repeatedly mentioned as a factor in the learning development of early readers. The studies repeatedly demonstrated that a positive environment for learning to read was one in which a parent, or some other significant person in the child's life, played a prominent role in generating an atmosphere conducive to reading.

O'Rourke, William J., "Are Parents an Influence on Adolescent Reading Habits?" Journal of Reading 22:340-343, January, 1979.

This article examined a study concerning the relationship between parents' and children's reading habits. The inventory measured quantitative reading habits in the following categories: reading and leisure time, friends and conversations, literature, reading and study, use of libraries, mechanics of reading, interest in reading, enjoyment, books, quantities of reading material and diversity of material. Parent and student responses in the category "use of libraries" were remarkably similar. There was also strong agreement between parents and students concerning "the mechanics of reading" category. This reflected their individual perceptions of their abilities in these skill areas. Parents and students were also similar in their lending, borrowing and purchasing of books. The results of this study supported the idea that parental influence on reading is strong during the preschool and early elementary years and that as students approach adolescence, the major influences shift from the home to the peer group.

Hewison, Jenny, and Tizard, J., "Parental Involvement and Reading Attainment," The British Journal of Educational Psychology 50:209-215, November, 1980.

This article studied a number of home background factors and reading ability in three samples of working class children aged 7-8, using standardized tests given to the children, and parental interviews. The home background factor which emerged as most strongly related to achieved reading ability was whether or not the mother regularly heard the child read ("coached"). IQ and coaching both had independent contributions to make to the prediction of reading performance. An increasing awareness of the need for cooperation between the home and the school and the significant part that a child's home environment plays in determining his educational progress were well documented.

Jolly, Thomas, "Would You Like For Me to Read You a Story?" The Reading Teacher 33:994-997, May, 1980.

This article pertained to the value of reading aloud to children. Research by Dolores Durkin indicated that children whose parents had read aloud to them learned to read earlier and more easily than children who were not read to. Some of the benefits of reading aloud to children were listed such as concept development, intake of new ideas, preparation for understanding written language and expansion of language and listening skills. It was noted that some parents do not read to their children because of lack of confidence in their abilities or embarassment of their reading skills. A list of ways to help parents become more effective was presented along with ways for teachers to help parents. Specific materials to read aloud were suggested and described.

Smith, Carl B., "The Effect of Environment on Learning to Read," Parents and Reading, pp. 10-22, International Reading Association, Inc., Newark, Delaware, 1971.

In this article, the relationship between a child's environment and his success in reading was explored. The role of language was stressed, and the availability of books. It was also noted that reading ability is affected by parents and children discussing various experiences and books to develop concepts and an understanding of these concepts. A correlation between poor language development, poor reading and a nonverbal environment was stressed.

The Need for Parental Involvement

Strang, Ruth, Helping Your Child Improve His Reading, pp. 50-63, E. P. Dutton & Co., Inc., New York, 1962.

The author discussed the valuable role of parents reading aloud to children. It was stated that the child who has become acquainted with the language patterns of literature by hearing stories read aloud finds it easier to anticipate words and phrases when he begins to read for himself. The importance of the child reading to the parent was stressed as it not only gives the child extra practice in reading, but also affords the parents opportunities to give him the approval that helps him along the road to better reading. These concepts were supplemented by testimonials of many children.

Simmons, Barbara, and Lawrence, Paula Smith, "Beginning Reading: Welcome Parents," Childhood Education 57:156-160, January, 1981.

The authors stressed the significance of parental modeling and the impact of the home environment along with the need for parents to serve as informed guides for their children. Various techniques were described by which parents can encourage the development of reading and thinking skills in their children. It was noted that children improve language abilities by interacting in language-rich environments, usually with parents. The authors noted the importance of teachers and parents uniting to optimize learning environments.

Duff, R. Eleanor, and Adams, Margaret E., "Parents and Teachers: Partners in Improving Reading Skills," The Clearing House 54:207-209, January, 1981.

This article described the forces in a child's life affecting his reading development as being those of a teacher and parent. The authors listed instructional changes to improve reading achievement which could be practiced by teachers developing reading skills. Areas to which parents should become sensitive were also listed. These included: increased involvement in the school's reading activities, improvement of parental reading habits, and an increased awareness of a child's interests. It was stressed that parents are "a child's most important reading model".

Reichert, Sara and Dick, "Partners in Education," Momentum 11:8-9, May, 1980.

The authors examined the relationship that should exist between teachers and parents in order for them to be effective partners in the overall development of a child. They placed the major responsibility for improving relationships with the educators. Four principles were given for educators to accomplish this task. They were: clarification of their own role in a child's overall education, clarification of their expectations of parents' roles, identification of ways educators can help parents with their responsibility, and personalization of relationships with parents.

STRATEGIES TO INCREASE PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

Children's Book Council, "Getting Parents Involved in Books for Children," The Reading Teacher 32:822-825, April, 1979.

This article contained a description of seven proposals to increase parent participation in their children's reading activities. These proposals follow: sessions related to integrating children's books into family life, packets of reading-related materials to be distributed to new mothers, discussions of children's books by fathers, T.V. programs focusing on children's books as an essential part of family life, workshops for parents on reading topics, fifteen minute T.V. programs focusing on books for specific age groups, and book fairs. These seven proposals were chosen from four hundred to receive grants from the Children's Book Council.

Criscuolo, Nicholas P., "Activities that Help Involve Parents in Reading," The Reading Teacher 32:417-419, January, 1979.

Criscuolo stated that parents who are aware of a school's reading program are better able to help their children. He offered six specific procedures and activities to encourage parent involvement. These procedures had been used successfully in the New Haven, Connecticut, public school system. The procedures and activities were organized in the following manner: parent resource rooms, reading progress letters, reading homework programs, newspaper columns for parents, reading recipes and programs involving children and materials. It was noted that interaction between home and school helps the parents aid their children in the accomplishment of reading and acquaints parents with the school's reading program.

Wilkens, Lea-Ruth C., Ph.D., Why Your Child Can Read, pp. 7-46, 71-84, Readon Publishing Co., Webster, Texas, 1980.

The author listed ten suggestions for parents to help their children in the area of reading. Daily assurance, taking an active interest in the child's reading program, was considered the "key to success". Included with each strategy were reasons for its importance, and procedures to accomplish it. Book lists were given for preschoolers, family reading, poetry, bible stories, and even for building paperback libraries. The cost of the latter was also given. The book was written as a practical guide for parents who want to take part in their children's reading success.

Vukelich, Carol, "Parents Are Teachers: A Beginning Reading Program," The Reading Teacher 31:524-527, February, 1978.

This article described the Preschool Readiness Outreach Program (PROP). PROP's primary purpose was to share with parents of three to five year olds ideas on ways to help their children develop beginning reading skills. Two formats were used: weekly workshops and monthly pamphlets. The workshops consisted of twenty-six weekly sessions used to construct educational games which would help children develop skills basic to beginning reading. Nine pamphlets suggested ways to use readily available materials to stimulate and extend children's beginning reading skills. Parents were also given information on child development and child-rearing ideas.

Ellis, Diann Waskul, "Reading Day at the Mall," The Reading Teacher 33:388-390, January, 1980.

This article described an event organized by the San Mateo County Reading Association and the San Francisco Reading Association to inform parents of young children about the importance of reading to children. A "Reading Day at the Mall" was sponsored during which time people, dressed as storybook characters, read to children. Parents were given pamphlets containing hints for helping preschoolers and beginning readers, and a bibliography of appropriate books for children ages three to eight. This program was so successful that it was voted an annual event.

Indrisano, Roselmina, "Reading Workshops for Parents," Instructor 88:97-99, December, 1978.

Indrisano stated his guidelines and program ideas for successful reading workshops for parents. He stressed a warm and friendly approach in dealing with parents. The use of an initial questionnaire to be answered by parents to make their feelings and expectations known was found to be very beneficial. He explained various program ideas, and specific activities to be carried out at home. He described a learning games workshop, a creative arts workshop, a community guidebook, a book/magazine discussion group and a media exchange. He also listed additional resources.

Esworthy, Helen Feaga, "Parents Attend Reading Clinic, Too," The Reading Teacher 32:831-834, April, 1979.

The author described a parent workshop of the 1978 Summer Reading Clinic at Hood College in Frederick, Maryland. The objectives of the program were to orient parents to the purposes of the Summer Reading Clinic, to further the parents' knowledge about reading by offering workable ideas for home and to teach parents about instructional devices by having them create some for the clinic. The sessions were divided according to the areas of readiness, sight-vocabulary and word attack sessions, comprehension and questioning sessions, and functional reading sessions.

Koppman, Patricia, "Parents Are Part of the Reading Rainbow, Too," Early Years 11:30-33, May, 1981.

This article stressed the responsibility that educators must assume to help bring a child's parents into their reading development. The importance of school-home communication was analyzed and specific strategies were listed to improve this communication. Research conducted by Sucher, found the home environment to be a major influence on the way in which a child learns and parents to be their children's best models. It was suggested to contact parents with good news prior to negative communication. Improved parent meetings and improved communication bulletins were viewed as successful strategies in involving parents in their children's reading development. Skill reinforcement and skill extensions at home were stressed.

Harrington, Alma, "Teaching Parents to Help at Home," Parents and Reading, pp. 49-56, International Reading Association, Inc., Newark, Delaware, 1971.

The author discussed the impact that a child's home situation and his parents can have upon the individual's learning development. "Helping Children With Reading in the Home," a program designed and implemented to improve communications and relations between the home and the school, was explored. This concept was an informational background course for the Hamburg, New York Central School. The course emphasized that a reading skill should be practiced and built up in both the home and school. A list of suggestions for parents to help their children in reading was included.

ACTIVITIES FOR PARENT-CHILD PARTICIPATION IN READING DEVELOPMENT

Preschool Activities

Giordano, Gerard, "Preparing Children for Reading," Day Care and Early Education 7:16-19,41, Winter, 1979.

Giordano outlined six prereading exercises for parents or day care providers which are designed to encourage children to transfer their oral language ability to reading. The exercises were based on research that indicated that children's learning is a constructive process, and the format for learning is designed to be part of a sensitive relationship between an individual parent or caregiver and a child. The exercises included: reading a book to a child from 8 months on (accompanied by literal, critical and judgmental questions), labelling household objects, explaining environmental signs, creating a book, building a word bank, and acting out stories. Giordano also listed the advantage to the communicative approach to reading instruction as allowing for the facilitation of expressive language and not just the repetition of sounds.

Sparkman, Brandon, and Saul, Jane, Preparing Your Preschooler for Reading, pp. 1-115, Schocken Books, Inc., New York 1977.

The authors stressed the essential role that parents can play in the development of their child's reading. They discussed the experiences which are important to this development. These included: reading to your child and building concepts, talking with your child to build vocabulary, visually discriminating likenesses and differences and noting details. A large number of games were described in detail which could be used to prepare preschoolers for reading. These games were divided into visual and listening categories and all games could be made at home. The games were listed in sequential order. Each listing included needed materials, directions for making them, and procedures for playing them. Illustrations appeared throughout the book. Lists of recommended reading and listening materials for children were also listed.

Kirkland, Eleanor R., Child Readiness for Reading: What Can Parents Do?, Educational Resources Information Center, Ed 195 985, California Reading Association, Sacramento, California, November, 1980, 11 pp.

Kirkland discussed the various activities which parents can provide daily that will help develop child readiness skills for reading. Included were: exposure to and interaction with books, emphasized broad language development, writing activities such as tracing and copying, labels placed on toys, notation of environmental print, and concept and vocabulary development through varied experiences. These various strategies were described in detail and several examples were listed to aid in their accomplishment.

Strickland, Dorothy, Ph.D., "Take Part in a Miracle Help Your Child Learn to Read," Early Years 11:5-9, December, 1980.

This article dealt with ways for parents to play an important part in their child's reading process through the development of effective communication skills. Strickland stressed that parents remember the unique development of each individual child. Homes should offer opportunities for language play in the form of games, songs and riddles. Parents should also provide their children with as broad a language background or vocabulary foundation as possible. The most important factor for parents in helping develop understanding about the reading process was oral reading to their children on a frequent, systematic basis.

Ervin, Jane, Ph.D., Your Child Can Read and You Can Help, pp. 37-297, Doubleday and Company, Inc., Garden City, New York, 1979.

This book was organized around ways for parents to help their children read. Parents' crucial role in preparation for reading was explained and specific activities and games were suggested for parents to provide prereading experience and guidance. These included activities centered around language development, relationship association, prediction development along with dexterity development in accompanying art activities. A series of lessons was provided to teach a child to read. The author also developed a checklist to evaluate a school's reading program. Book lists for different age groups were included.

Mountain, Lee, "How Parents Are Teaching Their Preschoolers to Read," Parents and Reading, pp. 76-86, International Reading Association, Inc., Newark, Delaware, 1971.

The author described a simple and economical method for parents to help their preschoolers acquire a headstart in reading. This method employed three materials: word cards, stories written by parents and phonics games. It was suggested that after the child learned two or three nouns, he should be introduced to a verb so that he could read sentences. The phonics games encouraged a child to make a connection between a sound and a letter, which ultimately led to the understanding of word development, sentence structure and comprehension. Several examples were given in each of the material areas.

Gagliardo, Ruth, "What a Parent Can Do to Help at Home," Parents and Reading, pp. 5-9, International Reading Association, Inc., Newark, Delaware, 1971.

The author felt that a child had the best start in the world when he/she was born into a reading family. Numerous strategies were listed to enable parents to prepare a child for the adventure of reading. These included: singing nursery rhymes, taking trips to the park, the zoo, and various other places, and verbally interacting with these excursions, creating stories about the child and his/her world, allowing for library visits and the ultimate ownership of reading materials. Several books were listed and highly recommended as those which would be of great benefit to parents. The author also noted the individual strengths of the recommended books.

Doman, Glenn, How to Teach Your Baby to Read, pp. 17-75, 107-150, Doubleday and Company, Inc., Garden City, New York, 1975.

In his book the author explained why young children want to, can, and should learn to read. He discussed controversies concerning early reading and he also introduced a step-by-step method for parents to teach their children to read. This method stressed parental attitude and approach, and the size and orderliness of the reading matter. Initially, parents were instructed to print various words on poster board. These words consisted of self words, family words, home words, and in general words that the child was involved with. Mastery of one word allowed for progression to the next word. After reading the given word lists, the child was taught to read sentences, and from these, word combinations. The author also listed various books for children to read in the order in which they should be read.

Karl, Jean, "Building Interests and Selecting Books for Children," Parents and Reading, pp. 37-42, International Reading Association, Inc., Newark, Delaware, 1971.

This article stressed the importance of parental encouragement concerning the development of reading skills and attitudes. Parents should know what interests their child and they should build upon these interests. The author described the essential aspects of early, simple books as being interesting in color, design, and texture as well as having something to say to the immediate perception of the child who looks at it. These books should be worth looking at more than once. Strategies were listed which parents could follow to encourage broad reading development in their children. A list of guidelines was included by which a parent may help a child in the selection of reading material.

Activities for Children in the Primary Grades

Koppman, Patricia, "Recipes for Reading," Instructor 88:30-32,34,34,34, August, 1978.

This article contained numerous activities to promote and reinforce reading growth. These suggestions were divided into two categories: activities to do at home and activities to do at school. For each activity there followed an objective, a list of necessary materials, and a set of specific directions. The activities were on the primary level.

Sucher, Floyd, "A Home-grown Approach to Boosting Reading Skills," Early Years 9:58-59,65, May, 1979.

Sucher listed specific suggestions for parent-child reading activities for the summer and school year. He noted that with a little guidance parents can have a very positive influence over their child's reading growth and attitudes. His suggestions fell under the following general headings: provision of a rich reading atmosphere, provision of reading materials, provision of time for reading and sharing, the capture of natural reading experiences, and reading experiences while traveling. Specific suggestions and activities were given for each general topic.

Manning, Gary, Ph.D., and Manning, Mary Ann, Ph.D., "Parents and Kids Talk, Talk it Up," Early Years 11:26-27,84, January, 1981.

This article listed activities which provide learning experiences that both parent and child can share in together. The activities were built upon language experiences and communication activities found in daily home life. The activities were listed under the headings of speaking, visual expression, creative dramatics, singing rhythmic activities, reading, and writing. Under each heading, the author listed several activities for parents to participate in with their children. Lists for additional books dealing with language experience were also provided.

Baker, Carol "Games Parents Play," Times Educational Supplement 3343:34, July 11, 1980.

Baker stated that reading should not be the monopoly of either teacher or parent, and that cooperation between the two is essential to a child's development. The greatest advantage afforded parents concerning their child's reading development was listed as the amount of time available for reading activities compared to the infrequent luxury of a one-to-one relationship with a reading teacher. Various home-made games were discussed which stressed special interest areas and varying degrees of difficulty. It was also noted that these games could be supplemented by the creation of small personal books, scrapbooks and captioned pictures. Other supplementary activities were listed.

Schrenker, Cecilia, Ed., What Every Parent Should Know About Reading, Educational Resources Information Center, Ed 200 907, Washington State Reading Association, West Allis, Washington, March, 1981, 33 pp.

The author discussed ways for parents to support the school reading program. These included: limiting television viewing and increasing the amount of time devoted to reading activities, offering supplementary instruction at home which reinforced and enriched school programs and scheduling reading activities at convenient times in quiet places. Specific activities were listed which allowed for reading growth in the home environment. Four techniques were described to increase cooperative family worktime in the area of reading.

Miller, Burley, "What Parents Can Do for the School," Parents and Reading, pp. 107-111, International Reading Association, Inc., Newark, Delaware, 1971.

Before parents can be effective change agents, they must know what is happening in the schools. They must have open communication with the schools and an open mind to new approaches to learning. There are many ways parents can help schools by directly working with their children. The author examined a list of twenty suggestions for parents to support and supplement formal education. This list was prepared by the Division of Elementary Education, Board of Education of New York City. These suggestions were directed at creating an environment that would nourish growth, wonder, and learning.

Criscuolo, Nicholas P., "Reading Motivation Through the Teacher-Parent Partnership," Momentum 11:21-23, December, 1980.

This article described ten effective ways for parents and teachers to work together to motivate children to read. It was stressed that teachers should ask parents to aid their children in the selection of books by the "rule of thumb" method. Teachers were encouraged to provide lists of games to reinforce reading skills. Several home-activities were listed to motivate reading along with strategies for reluctant readers evolving around interests and hobbies. Emphasis was placed on the importance of environmental print and the need for a balanced reading diet.

SUMMARY

Research indicated that there is a strong relationship between a child's success in reading and the amount of parental involvement in the area of reading. Duff and Adams noted parents as a child's first and most influential teacher and the child's most important reading model. Parents are the second force in a child's life having major influence on his ability to learn, and the primary source of nurturance of formal education. O'Rourke supported the idea that parental influence on reading is strong during the preschool and early elementary years, later to be replaced by peer influence.

The importance of early oral language was stressed by Smith and Giordano. Parents should provide children with as broad a language foundation as possible. This process can begin when the child is an infant. It is important that parents stimulate and reinforce a child's sound-making by responding positively so that the child will repeat the sounds. Oral language ability may be considered a basis for developing reading skills. For this reason, it is very beneficial for parents to spend time talking to, and talking with, their young children. The child learns to recognize and "read" oral signs which will soon be replaced by written symbols.

Jolly claimed the practice of reading aloud to a child was the most valuable influence a parent can have upon his child's development. This idea was supported by Durkin's

research which indicated that children whose parents had read aloud to them learned to read earlier and more easily than children who were not read to. Strang stated that the child who has become acquainted with the language patterns of literature by having stories read aloud finds it easier to anticipate words and phrases when he begins to read for himself. If children are read to often and words and phrases are pointed out to them, then they begin to learn the most important lesson of all, that reading is supposed to make sense. Parents can alert their child to the meaningfulness of letter symbols by occasionally running their fingers under a line as they read sentences to their children. This also subtly indicates the left to right movement and the downward progression of lines on a page.

A parent shouldn't stop at just reading to his child, but should interact with his child about the material being read. Discussion about the story or even about the pictures is beneficial to language development. It is also important to encourage a child to predict. If children learn prediction, they learn to expect comprehension and to work toward it.

The importance of a child reading to a parent was also stressed. In their study of home background factors and reading ability, Hewison and Tizard found that the factor which most strongly related to achieved reading ability was whether or not the mother regularly heard the child read.

This time for oral reading by the child not only provided the opportunity for reading practice, but it also demonstrated the parent's interest in and approval of the child's reading activities. Wells supported this concept with his study of positive and negative home experiences that affect reading motivation. He identified the two most positive forces affecting reading as being those of parental supportiveness and arousal of interest. Parents who supplemented their children's reading growth with library trips, books at home, praise and interest in their reading development demonstrated very positive influences on their child's reading ability. Karl stressed the importance of parents becoming aware of what interests their children have and building upon these interests in the area of reading.

According to Smith, Giordano and Teale the availability of books is an important environmental factor in promoting reading growth. The availability of books is not determined merely by the number of books owned by the family, but also extensive use of the local library as a source of reading material. This availability is also not limited to books but could include newspapers, magazines and environmental print. Reading and responding to environmental print is a basic way by which children come to realize the function of written language.

Teale listed four environmental factors which are interdependent in promoting reading growth. They were: the

availability and range of reading materials, the amount of reading demonstrated in the home and its understood function, the correlation between reading and writing and the quality of interaction between the child and the parents in regard to reading activities. It was also stressed that parents need to provide children with many experiences valued in school. They should take them places they will eventually read about such as a zoo, supermarket, department store, or park. By talking about such experiences, parents will help broaden their children's knowledge and vocabulary.

Reading should not be the monopoly of either parent or teacher stated Baker. Cooperation between these two forces is essential to a child's development. Esworthy stressed the value of training parents to work with their children. Criscuolo stated that parents who are aware of a school's reading program are better able to help their children. Research by Grimmett and McCoy supported this concept by indicating that parental involvement can influence the child's reading performance when parents receive information about the reading program and consequently devote more time and understanding to reading activities at home. Parents who wish to help their children must remain in close contact with the school and their child's teacher to insure that appropriate materials and sound techniques are used at home.

Reichert, Duff, and Adams listed the significant

influential forces affecting a child's reading ability as parent and teacher. They listed the following principles as necessary for a supportive relationship to exist between these two forces: the clarification of educator's role, the clarification of parent's role, the identification of ways educators can help parents with their responsibility and the personalization of the relationship between educators and parents.

Wilkens, Esworthy, Ellis, Criscuolo, Koppman, Indrisano, and Vukelich described events and strategies to successfully acquaint and involve parents with their significant role in their child's reading development. These proposals included packets distributed to mothers in maternity wards, T.V. programs, library programs, workshops, speakers and home parties similar to Tupperware parties.

Harrington discussed a program to improve communications and relations between the home and the school to help them reinforce each other, and add needed strength and support to the area of reading. This concept was an informational background course in reading as an adult education course for parents.

Criscuolo described six effective ways for parents and teachers to work together. These methods included: parent resource rooms, reading progress letters, reading homework programs, a newspaper column for parents and

reading recipes and programs involving children and materials.

Miller, Manning, Sucher, Koppman and Baker listed activities and suggestions for parent-child reading strategies for outside of school hours and for summer reinforcement. These activities included book fairs, the construction of educational games, the creation of books and stories and various other strategies.

Parents stimulate a child's maximum physical growth through vitamins, exercise, diet, rest and care. It would only seem logical that parents should stimulate the maximum mental growth of their children and one way of doing this is to foster the development and reinforcement of reading skills.

CONCLUSIONS

It was concluded from such authors as Duff, Adams and O'Rourke that parental influence in the area of reading is strong during the preschool and early elementary years. This influence involved the development of a broad oral language foundation when the child is an infant, later to be replaced by written symbols. Smith and Giordano agreed that the oral language ability can be considered a basic background for the development of reading skills.

It was also determined by Jolly and Durkin that the practice of reading aloud to a child was the most valuable influence a parent can have upon a child's reading development, and that parents were recognized as a child's most important reading model and most influential initial teacher. The availability and range of reading materials was perceived to be an important factor in promoting growth, according to Smith, Giordano and Teale.

It was further concluded that reading should not be the sole resonsibility of trained educators. Parental involvement in reading readiness skill development and supplementation of formal reading instruction was found to be necessary to a child's reading growth by Esworthy, Criscuolo, Grimmett, and McCoy. The need for parents to be acquainted with reading techniques, strategies and home-centered activities was

recognized. In order for parents to help their children in the area of reading, they must be guided or directed in appropriate strategies to be developed with their children. This evolved as the most difficult aspect of parental involvement. Someone must initiate this involvement or participation and it appears that the responsibility lies with the educators. There is an availability of parent-child reading activities. The problem lies in getting them into the hands of parents. Many of these activities are performed naturally by some parents, however being aware of their value and their availability would be a tremendous aid to all parents and ultimately, all children.

Helping a child build his or her concept of reading, a positive attitude toward reading, and a vast background of words and experiences are the major influences parents can have upon a child's reading growth. "The schools give the tools, we as parents give the real experiences with print." (Swaby:281)

RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that:

1) Parents be informed of the valuable effect they can have on their child's prereading development. Mothers-to-be and new mothers be presented with information concerning the oral language development of their child. Libraries, churches and various organizations initiate programs and develop pamphlets to inform parents of prereading activities and procedures.

2) Parents be motivated to develop home libraries or to acquire library cards to provide their children with a variety of reading experiences. Parents be encouraged to read regularly to or with their children. Parents be encouraged to improve their own reading attitudes and habits.

3) Schools acknowledge the positive role parents can assume in their child's reading growth. Educators initiate more effort in informing parents of their important role even before their children attend school.

4) Schools initiate activities to open the channels of communication and encourage and increase parental participation in the area of reading. Workshops be organized to acquaint parents with reading techniques and materials. Schools provide materials and strategies for parents to work with children at home to supplement and reinforce the school's formal reading program.

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